



## Realizing Rogues: Theory, Organization, Dialogue

Adam Hansen

### abstract

Examining the work of Isaac Julien, and theorists such as Marx, Deleuze and Negri, the paper employs an interdisciplinary and interperiodic methodology in order to evince how the deviant mobility of rogues renders proximate places, spaces and people otherwise strenuously differentiated. Yet such mobility is in fact made possible by prescribed patterns. Rogues do not simply subvert or parody normative states and relationships; rather, they circulate along vectors commencing from within normative states. Those dislocated are excrescences that emerge within, and exemplify the deepest structures and contradictory potentialities of, material and ideological organization. Ultimately, means of *realizing* the differentiation of one person or group from another habitually animate the very relationships that are being prohibited. The intention is not to presumptuously speak for, or organize, rogues as such: that would be to offer an account of deviant mobility from a safely sedentary position, and one that further marginalizes the already marginal. If anything, the aim is to show how people are written out of history, but are nevertheless, *in that negation*, written into history in compelling ways. Admittedly, this in turn may provide insight more into normative than deviant socio-cultural modes: but to realize the roguish is necessarily to realize those who made them so.

### Introduction

This paper seeks to establish an interdisciplinary and interperiodic dialogue between theorists, commentators, and artists concerned with the theme of the deviant mobility of 'rogues' within organizations, whether those organizations are economic, material, social or cultural (or a combination of these). I draw on texts, architecture and visual art selected from the period of globalized capital (early modernity to the present), a period in which deviant mobilities were at once dynamized and prescribed *by* globalized capital. Using history to read theory, and vice versa, it is possible to argue that to realize rogues is to realize the proximities effected by deviant mobility.

The paper is in three parts. After outlining a history of problematic definitions of rogues, I then evaluate some theories of deviant mobility. Finally, I analyze one contemporary aesthetic response to the topic: by being sensitive to both the histories and theories of deviant mobility, the film-artist Isaac Julien realizes some of the inconsistencies of discriminations between the roguish and the reputable.

The interrelation of theory and history has already produced much excellent work exploring early modern representations of rogues.<sup>1</sup> Yet the proximities effected by deviant mobility, and realizations of it, afflict the discriminatory organizations produced by and reinforcing normative ideological and material structures in other periods too, as this paper will show. To realize rogues is not only to realize challenges to normative structures at particular historical moments, but also to recognize that these challenges are only possible because of instabilities within those normative structures at those moments. My intention, then, is not simply to try to redeem an essentialized roguishness for radicalism. Rather, I wish to describe some of the ways in which realizing roguishness embodies and exposes ambivalences and inconsistencies within specific socio-cultural organizations.

This is a significant period in which to use both theory and history to think critically about these ambivalences and inconsistencies. In recent years, policy makers and presidents have organized the world anew around polarized axes of 'good' and 'evil'.<sup>2</sup> In the words of both the Clinton and Bush administrations, the latter axis is composed of countries the West has designated 'rogue nations' and 'rogue states'.<sup>3</sup> Whatever the merits, shortcomings, substance or spuriousness of these designations, they inform and reinforce discourses that permit processes intimately akin to those detailed by Edward Said in *Orientalism*. Designating a state or nation 'rogue' rationalizes ideological and material practices aimed at "describing...teaching...settling...ruling...dominating, restructuring, and having authority".<sup>4</sup> When governments organize an 'axis of evil' made of 'rogue states' they also construct deviant Others; in turn they affirm a willed discontinuity with these Others, denying the possibility of dialogue or ambiguity in order to consolidate a coalition of the 'just', 'free' and 'civilized'.

As a reading of Said suggests, by deploying the term 'rogue' in this way, contemporary governments are operating in a well-established tradition. Yet the tradition reaches further back, as Craig Dionne and Steve Mentz indicate, in their introduction to a recent anthology of literary-historical criticism examining early modern rogues, or 'cony-catchers':

Is there a sense that non-rogue nations depend on the presence of rogues to define themselves and to designate the outer reaches of acceptable behaviour in international relations, just as ... the cony-catcher serves as a demon Other and tutor for early modern men and women negotiating the cultural changes of the city?<sup>5</sup>

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- 1 See especially Dionne, C. and S. Mentz (eds.) (2004) *Rogues and Early Modern English Culture*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
  - 2 George W. Bush (January 29 2002) State of the Union Address [<http://www.whitehouse.gov>]. All websites visited 12-19 July 2004.
  - 3 George W. Bush (September 27 2003), meeting with Vladimir Putin, [<http://www.whitehouse.gov>]; National Security Advisor Sandy Berger (January 22 1999) 'On Keeping America Secure For the 21<sup>st</sup> Century', Press Briefing by Senior Administration Officials, [<http://www.whitehouse.gov>].
  - 4 Said, E. (1978 rpt 1995) *Orientalism*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 3.
  - 5 Dionne C. and S. Mentz (2004) 'Introduction', in Dionne and Mentz, op.cit., 10.

Yet as with terms describing early modern rogues, the concept of 'rogue state' is "highly nuanced".<sup>6</sup> Who or what is deemed roguish depends more on the interests of the designator than the actions of the designated. To cite Noam Chomsky, "a 'rogue state' is not simply a criminal state, but one that defies the orders of the powerful – who are, of course, exempt."<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, so nuanced is the concept of 'rogue' that it is liable to critical appropriations that render ambiguous and subvert normative definitions of decent and deviant states. These subversions expose the often latent moral and material continuities between the poles of 'good' and 'evil' (evident in arms sales by the West to brutal regimes, for example). As one specialist in international legal relations has asserted:

Particular states or groups of states that set themselves up as the authoritative judges of the world common good, in disregard of the views of others, are in fact a menace to international order, and thus to effective action in this field.<sup>8</sup>

Hence, to Ibrahim Nafie, writing in Egypt, Israel is a 'rogue state'; and in recent works both Chomsky and William Blum identify the US as the pre-eminent 'rogue nation'.<sup>9</sup> Even conservative commentators like Samuel Huntington accept that to most of the world, America is "becoming the rogue superpower".<sup>10</sup>

Such reversals manifest not only the dangerous paradoxes of recent political terminology, but also the roguish qualities of 'rogue'. Supple and inclusive, it evades definition as it problematizes distinctions of licit and illicit, Other and Same, facilitating connections that are habitually disavowed by authorities seeking to police relations between such positions. As will be seen, in its etymology, usage, associations and history, 'rogue' has confounded attempts to arrest its meaning. In this, the word itself is comparable to those designated roguish. By exploring the dialogic potentials of rogues, we can perhaps revive or incite critical evaluations of certain of the terms deployed in contemporary discourse.

The use of 'rogue' is as persistent (and persistently problematic) in current international economic affairs as it is in global political or military relations. In 1995, Nick Leeson brought down Barings Bank, while working as a broker in Singapore. His fraudulent speculations and dodgy dealings ultimately cost 1200 people's jobs, while earning him marketable notoriety as a 'Rogue Trader'. Before his trial, however, Leeson shrugged off the roguish associations he would later capitalize upon, to protest: "I don't think of myself as a criminal".<sup>11</sup> Yet there is more to Leeson's words than a plea of innocence. As the economic commentator Will Hutton has argued, Leeson's activities simply

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6 Chomsky, N. (2000) *Rogue States: The Rule of Force in World Affairs*. London: Pluto Press, 29.

7 Chomsky, op.cit., 30.

8 Bull, H. (1983) 'Justice in International relations', in *Hagey Lectures*. University of Waterloo: Waterloo, Ontario. 1-35, cited in N. Chomsky (1999) *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo*. London: Pluto Press, 156.

9 Nafie (November 5 2003) *Al-Ahram*, cited in *The Editor*, [<http://www.guardian.co.uk>]; Chomsky, op.cit.; Blum, W. (2002) *The Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*. Zed Books.

10 *Foreign Affairs* March-April 1999, cited in Chomsky, op.cit., 47.

11 [<http://www.bbc.co.uk/crime/caseclosed/nickleeson.shtml>].

represented ‘capitalism in extremis’.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, echoing nineteenth-century commentators (notably Marx, as will be seen below), Hutton identifies roguish characteristics in contemporary capitalism: “Financial capital...is mobile and flexible; it has no loyalties, nor does it expect any. Its job is to chase the highest returns.”<sup>13</sup> In a sense, this is all Leeson did in his pursuit of ever larger profits, thereby adhering to the rapacious imperatives of his trade. Conceived in these terms, Leeson could legitimately claim he wasn’t a ‘criminal’ simply because the system in which he operated was inherently criminal. Fittingly, Dionne and Mentz make further interperiodic comparisons to determine the roguishness of modern enterprise:

While many of the factual details of recent shady financial practices remain as murky as the true history of the early modern rogue, several features of modern American capitalism in its current crisis resonate with the interrogations early modern writers made of Tudor-Stuart rogues, including the mystique of a private language, an opaque but demonstrable solidarity among coconspirators, and a way of doing business that relies on the credulity of a vast number of conies.<sup>14</sup>

With regard to other key words in my title, ‘Representations of’ stood in stead of ‘Realizing’ for a long time. I selected the latter because it offers a wider range of interpretations. ‘Realizing’ invokes a sense of displaying and representing; it also suggests how representation is informed by, and sometimes constructs, the real, and how this dynamic, phrased in a continuing aspect, is *in process*. It similarly conveys apprehension – comprehending, capturing, and unease. Comprehension sometimes works to facilitate capture, textual and actual: the attempt to understand rogues often involves an attempt to contain them. But when rogues thwart containment, bringing about proximities that material and ideological segregations seek to inhibit, they induce unease in those who seek to organize through such segregations.

My ideas about dialogue are informed by the work of Mikhail Bakhtin. Bakhtin developed the concept of the *dialogic* by analyzing characteristics specific to, and interstitial between, languages, ideological formations, identities, and literary genres (notably the novel).<sup>15</sup> This concept is not only applicable to, and discernible in, discursive or textual formulations. It also helps to analyze the material and social forces represented in, and reproduced by, the meanings that discourses and cultural products appropriate and generate. Michael Holquist glosses the concept thus:

Dialogism argues that all meaning is relative in the sense that it comes about only as a result of the relation between two bodies occupying *simultaneous but different* space, where bodies may be

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12 Hutton, W. (1999) ‘Leeson isn’t the Only Guilty Party’, in *The Observer*, 11<sup>th</sup> July, [<http://www.guardian.co.uk>].

13 Hutton, W. (2004) *The World We’re In*. Abacus, 203.

14 Dionne and Mentz, op.cit., 9.

15 See, for example, Bakhtin M.M. (1981) ‘Discourse in the Novel’, in M. Holquist (ed.) *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin*, trans. C. Emerson and M. Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 298-99. However, as Holquist points out, Bakhtin never used the word ‘dialogic’ himself, and it does not represent a ‘systematic philosophy’; see Holquist, M. (1990) *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World*. London and New York: Routledge, 15-16.

thought of as ranging from the immediacy of our physical bodies, to political bodies and to bodies of ideas in general (ideologies).<sup>16</sup>

Bakhtin's consistent emphasis on 'interorientation' adds significance to the concept of dialogism.<sup>17</sup> Interorientation suggests the ways in which meaning, as conditioned by material circumstances, is contingent, not limitless (and is in fact rigorously context-bound). Yet meaning is nonetheless negotiable, either in contentious and explicit ways, or in subtle and more latent fashions, precisely because of its material bases. More than one voice, identity, position, or logic is articulated or articulating at any one time, even when *only* one voice is expressed. Indeed, monologue is possible only through a disavowal of, and thus in relation to, other voices. Hence Bakhtin's related coinage: *heteroglossia* (other tongues).

Dialogism, interorientation, and heteroglossia do not 'explain' all cultural products or material contexts all the time, in this study or beyond it. However, Bakhtin's ideas do provide a catalyst for discussing the relations between texts *and* contexts, materiality *and* representation, especially in relation to deviant mobility. Dialogism is manifested as the ingressions, egressions, and transgressions of rogues reveal the conflicted and permeable nature of ideological and physical environments where such hybridity is demonized. Moreover, dialogism animates how art realizes this deviant mobility. It indicates the ways in which aesthetic products cultivate ambiguity and irresolution by juxtaposing disparate discourses, thereby responding to the confusions constituting material realities. With dialogism, as with Bakhtin's theory of the Carnavalesque, transgression and the containment of transgression can occur simultaneously.<sup>18</sup> Expressions, communications, and the material contexts they realize, are hybrids, internally unstable, and radically suggestive. Even as opposed and distinct discourses are articulated, through dialogism denials can become affirmations, rejections can signal inclusions, and transgressive intercoursings are impossible to resist. These features of dialogism are perhaps initially best appreciated through an analysis of attempts to define rogues.

## Definitions

Rogues are not necessarily, inherently, or intentionally illegal, subversive or deviant, though the mere fact of their existence may render them so. They are not always mobile,

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16 Holquist, *op.cit.*, 20-21.

17 'Interorientation' is a word employed in Bakhtin's study of the early modern Carnavalesque; see (1984) *Rabelais and His World*, trans. H. Iswolsky. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 465.

18 On the Carnavalesque, see Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, *op.cit.*, 10-11, 15. The debate about whether the phenomena Bakhtin identifies (such as Carnival and the dialogic) facilitate transgression or the containment of transgression has occupied many critics. For seminal overviews and possible resolutions of the debate, see Stallybrass, P. and A. White (1985) *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 13-16, 56-57; and Dollimore, J. (1991 rpt 1996) *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 81-83, 88-89. As Dollimore notes, "containment is always susceptible (in principle, not a priori) to subversion by the selfsame challenge it has either incorporated, imagined, or actually produced (via containment)" (1991 rpt 1996: 85).

and even if they were that would not equalize their experiences, or representations of their experiences.<sup>19</sup> For the purposes of this paper, ‘rogues’ are defined as those who enact what is considered deviant mobility, whether they deviate from geographical, intellectual or moral norms.

The inclusiveness of the term ‘rogue’ is evident in its genesis. Dionne and Mentz assert:

The word *rogue* was coined in the 1560s, possibly by Thomas Harman, to describe vagrants who used disguise, rhetorical play, and counterfeit gestures to insinuate themselves into lawful social and political contexts. As plays, pamphlets, court records, and other historical and literary documents described this figure, the term *rogue* took on a large range of connotations, including ‘scoundrel’, ‘villain’, ‘atheist’, and ‘double-crosser’. *Rogue* became a catchall term for a variety of social deviants and outcasts, from rural migrants to urban con artists. ... In a short time the term became popular and polysemous.<sup>20</sup>

This account illustrates the perplexing confluence of fact and fiction that produced ‘rogues’, a confluence that in turn evokes the mixture of social types that the word came to represent.<sup>21</sup> As Martine Van Elk has shown, Elizabethan Bridewell Court records “present us not merely with a set of records about vagrants, but with a spectrum of socially condemned behaviour, linking the crime of vagrancy to crimes of sexuality and insubordination more generally”. Crucially, Elk continues, this penal and judicial treatment “would have enhanced the impact of stories of vagrants such as those found in the rogue literature, which must have resonated in a much wider way with deviant behaviour at all levels of society.”<sup>22</sup>

In efforts to determine what is meant by ‘rogue’, commentators past and present have often characterized rogues by their mobility. While this aids definition, it is important to recognize that there are many different types of movement, some local, some global,

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19 It is problematic to write any cultural history of rogues that includes realizations of Gypsies. In many ways Gypsy groups were and are a special case, with distinct social structures, languages, and cultural identities and practices. But they were only sometimes considered as such by authorities and commentators. A brilliant and necessarily sensitive account of the representations of Gypsies and their relations to other mobile groups can be found in Trumpener, K. (1995) ‘The Time of the Gypsies: A “People without History” in the Narratives of the West’, in A. Appiah and H.L. Gates (eds.) *Identities*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 338-79. See also Okely, J. (1983) *The Traveller-Gypsies*. Cambridge: CUP; Mayall, D. (1988) *Gypsy-Travellers in Nineteenth-Century Society*. Cambridge: CUP; Gmelch, S. (1986) ‘Groups that Don’t Want In: Gypsies and Other Artisan, Trader and Entertainer Minorities’, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 15: 307-330; and Lucassen, L. (1993) ‘Under the Cloak of Begging?: Gypsy Occupations in Western Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries’, *Ethnologia Europaea*, 23: 75-94.

20 Dionne and Mentz, op.cit., 1-2.

21 For useful recent accounts of the problematic interorientation of fact and fiction in the construction of the figure of the early modern rogue, see Fumerton, P. (2004), ‘Making Vagrancy (In)visible: *The Economics of Disguise in Early Modern Rogue Pamphlets*’, in Dionne and Mentz, op.cit., 193-210; Kinney, A.F. (2004) ‘Afterword: (Re)presenting the Early Modern Rogue’, in Dionne and Mentz, op.cit., 361-81; and Pories, K. (1996) ‘The Intersection of Poor Laws and Literature in the Sixteenth Century: Fictional and Factual Categories’, in Constance C. Relihan (ed.) *Framing Elizabethan Fictions: Contemporary Approaches to Early Modern Narrative Prose*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State UP, 17-40.

22 Van Elk, M. (2004) ‘The Counterfeit Vagrant: *The Dynamic of Deviance in the Bridewell Court Records and the Literature of Roguery*’, in Dionne and Mentz, op.cit., 121-22.

some forced, some forceful (some combining both of these, as in the arrogating enterprises of imperialism), some chosen, some needful, some predatory, some allowed, some proscribed. Diverse stratifications complicate what it is to be, and hence what it is to realize, the mobile. Such stratifications involve class, rank, or degree (past and present, ascribed, achieved, imitated, desired), age, gender, ethnicity (presumed, self-affirmed, designated), place of origin and distance from it, skills, criminality, legitimacy (whether apprehended or self-identified as 'deserving' or 'undeserving', 'sturdy' or infirm), and what Alexandre Vexliard has termed 'elementary' and 'structural' vagabondage.<sup>23</sup> Effacing this diversity risks de-historicizing the mobile and responses to them, aesthetic or socio-political. A wandering female hop-picker in the 1800s did not share the same material status and was not represented in the same way as a gentleman-highwayman (however rare a creature) in the early 1700s. In turn, neither is the same as one John Bodle. When questioned about his peregrinations in Southampton in 1639, Bodle replied that he was "by profession a bricklayer, and that hee doth not use to worke at his profession in the winter time, but doth go abroad to see fashions".<sup>24</sup> Such meandering compromises taxonomical organization.

Nonetheless, historically, material realities and ideological programmes interconnected to prevent the proximity of mobile and sedentary states. This separation has depended on definitions that essentialized and homogenized roguishness. However, historians working on a variety of periods and places have come to argue that no essential identity or universal experience of roguishness existed. Neither was there an organized subculture of roguish criminality, nor absolute dividing lines within and between the mobile and the sedentary. Even as extremes of stability and itinerancy existed, people slipped in and out of mobile and/or criminal states.<sup>25</sup> This problematizes the attempted demarcation of roguish and decent identities.

Precisely because of this *indefiniteness*, legal, penal, and ideological authorities have consistently attempted to categorize and determine precisely who or what was or was not a 'rogue', and, by association, a 'vagabond' or 'vagrant'. Yet as Paul Slack notes, such figurings were 'emotive, elastic', and context-specific.<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, they rarely

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23 As outlined in Vexliard (1956) *Introduction à la sociologie du vagabondage*. Paris: Librairie Marcel Rivière: 'elementary' vagabondage signifies 'occasional homelessness produced by earthquakes and fires', and 'structural' vagabondage signifies the 'vagabondage of the dispossessed and the unemployed in a society based on principles of individualism and free enterprise'. This translation and gloss of Vexliard's work is provided by Langan, C. (1995) *Romantic Vagrancy: Wordsworth and the Simulation of Freedom*. Cambridge: CUP, 215.

24 Cited in Sharpe, J.A. (1984 rpt 1999) *Crime in Early Modern England 1550-1750*. Harlow: Longman, 144.

25 See Morgan, G. and P. Rushton (1998) *Rogues, Thieves and the Rule of Law: The Problem of Law Enforcement in North East England 1718-1800*. London: UCL Press, 36; Sharpe, op.cit., 146; Hufton, O. (1972) 'Begging, Vagrancy, Vagabondage and the Law: an aspect of the Problem of Poverty in Eighteenth-century France', *European Studies Review*, 2(2): 97-123; Slack, P. (1988) *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England*. London and New York: Longman; and Rogers, N. (1991) 'Policing the Poor in Eighteenth-Century London: The Vagrancy Laws and Their Administration', *Histoire sociale – Social History*, 34 (47): 127-47.

26 Slack, P. (1974) 'Vagrants and Vagrancy in England, 1598-1664', *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series, 27: 362. On the changing semantics of terms such as 'vagrant' 'vagabond' and 'rogue' in the early modern period, for example, see Humphreys, R. (1999) *No Fixed Abode: A History of*

provided either semantic or material settlement. Terms and people were aggregated. During the English Civil War, Parliamentary legislation cemented associations between various types of mobile deviants. The “divers vagrant persons” who had become “Hawkers, to sell and cry about the streets” were to be whipped and imprisoned like “common rogues”.<sup>27</sup> Writing over 100 years later, Henry Fielding asserted that the very problem of *defining* ‘Vagabonds’ led to the inefficacy of statutes issued to ‘extirpate’ them. Such words assumed “a more complex Signification” with “vulgar Use”.<sup>28</sup> To combat this complexity, Fielding embarked on a resolute taxonomical organization of roguish wanderers. But his various classifications only worsened the dysfunction of the definitions, and the problems of ‘signification’ were still evident long after.

In Victorian society it was equally difficult to isolate the putatively roguish from the decent and sedentary. The poor shared lives of intermittent mobility and stasis, shared casual labour, shared economic misfortunes, and shared risks of illegality. Their numbers swelled with seasonal shifts and wage and price changes: “The tramp, the navvy, and the pedlar might be one and the same person at different stages of life, or even at different seasons of the year”.<sup>29</sup> Even skilled workers were forced into itinerancy throughout their careers: “the nomadic phase and the settled were often intertwined”.<sup>30</sup>

Negotiating this confusion, and illuminating the confluence of fact and fiction, the literary historian Patricia Fumerton offers a pragmatic way of conceiving mobile identities in the early modern period (but with relevance outside it). Fumerton argues that the term *vagrant* can be seen “metonymically to embrace most of the lower orders, not just the indigent and homeless...: itinerant labourers, including servants and apprentices, as well as those poor householders from the lowest depths of the amorphous ‘middling sort,’ who were at any time liable to...unsettling change”.<sup>31</sup> To parish, ward, and judicial authorities, “the vagrant experience need not involve physical mobility or even homelessness.”<sup>32</sup> Indeed, despite their efforts, those authorities exacerbated this confused classification as they “continued to have difficulty distinguishing the unemployed, the underemployed, and the multi-tasked or in-transit labouring poor from the incorrigibly idle or ‘sturdy beggar’”.<sup>33</sup> Making a case for

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*Responses to the Roofless and Rootless in Britain*. Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 33-34; and Griffiths, P. (1998) ‘Meanings of Nightwalking in Early Modern London’, *The Seventeenth Century*, 13 (2): 212-38.

27 Firth, C.H. and R.S. Rait (1911 rpt 1972) (eds.) *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum 1642-1660*. Holmes Beach, Florida: W.M. Gaunt and Sons Inc. Vol. I, 1021-23, Vol. II, 245-54.

28 Fielding, H. (1751) *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers*, in M.R. Zirker (ed.) (1998) *An Enquiry...and Related Writings*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 138.

29 Samuel, R. (1973) ‘Comers and Goers’, in H.J. Dyos and Michael Wolff (eds.) *The Victorian City: Images and Realities*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, Vol. I, 152.

30 Samuel, op.cit. 153.

31 Fumerton, P. (2000) ‘London’s Vagrant Economy: Making Space for “Low” Subjectivity’, in L.C. Orlin (ed.) *Material London ca. 1600*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 208.

32 Fumerton, op.cit., 210.

33 Fumerton, op.cit., 214.

“lowly lines of connectivity” amongst these types, Fumerton suggests this useful definition:

Rather than thinking of vagrants as constituting an organized subculture or specific class, we might best think of them as sharing an array of practices or habits – foremost being social, economic, and geographical mobility – that could be experienced in some forms and on certain occasions by more than the legally vagrant.<sup>34</sup>

We can therefore legitimately consider Fumerton’s vagrants as rogues, real, represented and realized. Their behaviour, ascribed or actual, is quintessentially dialogic, their identities are contingent and contested, and their motions connect disparate states. This dialogic character of roguishness will be exemplified by appraising the work of Isaac Julien. Before this, however, I will sketch some relevant theoretical perspectives that might be seen to enrich this reading of deviant mobility.

## Theorizing Deviant Mobility

Despite the efforts of any number of authorities, deviant wanderers defied the distinctions imposed upon them. The proscribed mobility of rogues actually connects and confuses ideas of the ‘sedentary’ and the ‘mobile’, insides and outsides, centres and margins. Such connections render proximate places, spaces, and people that are otherwise strenuously differentiated by legal, penal, and ideological organization. However, the deviant mobility that effects these connections is made possible by prescribed patterns of circulation. Rogues do not simply subvert or parody normative states and relationships. They travel along and beyond vectors commencing from within these normative states:

Capital by its nature drives beyond every spatial barrier. Thus the creation of the physical conditions of exchange – of the means of communication and transport – the annihilation of space by time – becomes an extraordinary necessity for it.<sup>35</sup>

As the above quote signals, in *Grundrisse* (1857-58) Karl Marx diagnosed compulsive restlessness as symptomatic of a versatile but insecure circulatory system, a system impelled to destroy as much as it creates, and in so doing creates, and only partially restrains, dissident energies.

Yet for Marx, of course, rogues were problematic, politically, theoretically and expressively. As part of what he termed the *lumpenproletariat*, they could not be trusted to manifest progressive imperatives.<sup>36</sup> Marx feared they opportunistically served reactionary interests all too easily. Aggregated with “ruined and adventurous offshoots of the bourgeoisie”, ‘decayed roués’, ‘discharged jailbirds’, ‘*lazzaroni ... maquereaus*’

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34 Fumerton, op.cit., 208, 217-18.

35 Marx, K. (1973) *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft)*, trans. M. Nicolaus. London: Allen Lane/New Left Review, 524.

36 On the complex semantic shifts of this term, and the problems it manifests for Marxist theory, see Draper, H. (1972) ‘The Concept of the “Lumpenproletariat” in Marx and Engels’, *Economies et Societes*, 6 (12): 2285-2312.

and ‘*literatti*’, and located somewhere at once within and without the main body of the working classes, vagrants, ‘vagabonds’ ‘tinkers’ and ‘beggars’ destabilized Marx’s dynamics and taxonomies of class struggle.<sup>37</sup> As Peter Stallybrass has noted, in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852) Marx subjects the *lumpenproletariat* to a ‘hysteria of naming’, breathlessly detailing the profusion of types who made up “the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass”, and doing so in a comparable profusion of tongues, whereby he “ransacks French, Latin and Italian”.<sup>38</sup> Yet by this, the integrity of Marx’s theory, the language he uses to articulate it, and his own status are compromised: is he implicating himself and his similarly polyglot, socially and geographically dislocated friends as revolutionary rogues?<sup>39</sup>

Negotiating Marx’s ambivalence, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have antagonistically re-written and revitalized his diagnoses. They sustain a sense of the deviance of roguish mobility, based on the knowledge that precisely because such mobility is demonized, its effects can never be reduced to a reactionary imperative. Deleuze and Guattari emphasize how capitalism produces an “awesome schizophrenic accumulation of energy or charge, against which it brings all its vast powers of repression to bear”; they proclaim that, in its expansiveness, “capitalism is continually reterritorializing with one hand what it was deterritorializing with the other”.<sup>40</sup>

Hence the relevance of the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari to the process of realizing rogues: they elaborated the ways in which illicit energies are produced within, and are mobilized through, licit structures. Importantly, Deleuze and Guattari foreground errancy in their figuring of the perverse, the libidinal, the psychotic, the nomadic, and the ‘schizo’, as entities “continually wandering about, migrating here, there, and everywhere”, immanent to, and disruptive of, the repressive relations of capitalism. But all such errancy is conditional upon pre-existing circulatory patterns. Thus:

The schizophrenic deliberately seeks out the very limit of capitalism: he is its inherent tendency brought to fulfillment [sic], its surplus product, its proletariat, and its exterminating angel.<sup>41</sup>

Rather than diminishing the ‘schizo’s’ troubling charge, this immanence only enhances it. But rather than this charge simply replacing repression with liberation wholesale, the reterritorializations of capitalism precipitate dialectic:

The capitalist axiomatic generates schizo-flows which are the basis of its restless and cosmopolitan energy while at the same time setting new limits on the socius.<sup>42</sup>

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37 Marx, K. (1852) *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, in *Selected Works*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 136-37.

38 Stallybrass, P. (1990) ‘Marx and Heterogeneity: Thinking the Lumpenproletariat’, *Representations*, 31: 72; Stallybrass, P. and A. White (1986) *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell UP, 129.

39 Many thanks to my anonymous reviewer for this point.

40 Deleuze, G. and F. Guattari (1984 rpt 1985) *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. R. Hurley, M. Seem. Helen R. Lane. London: Athlone Press, 34-35, 259.

41 Deleuze and Guattari, op.cit., 35.

42 Patton, P. (2000) *Deleuze and the Political*. London and New York: Routledge, 96.

Adapting Deleuze and Guattari, one can therefore situate in the trajectory of the astonishingly adaptive abstraction depicted as ‘capitalism’, the (seemingly) feeble, yet (unintentionally) dissident multiple figurings of the roguish. Deviant and heterogeneous restlessness mimics the rapacity of commerce. As Celeste Langan puts it: “the vagrant is the...hallucinatory double of capital, his endless mobility and identity...simulating the endless circulation of capital. ...Vagrancy is the symptom of a production whose sole logic is expansion.”<sup>43</sup>

Certainly, in the nineteenth century, the intercoursings induced by free trade could cause social instabilities, perceived as having a distinctly roguish cast. Late in Thomas Carlyle’s *Past and Present* (1843) comes a section entitled ‘Permanence’:

Permanence, persistence [sic] is the first condition of all fruitfulness in the ways of men. The ‘tendency to persevere,’ to persist in spite of hindrances, discouragements and ‘impossibilities:’ it is this that in all things distinguishes the strong soul from the weak; the civilised burgher from the nomadic savage, – the Species man from the Genus Ape! ...The civilised man lives not in wheeled houses. He builds stone castles, plants lands, makes life long marriage-contracts; – has long-dated hundred-fold possessions, not to be valued in the money-market; has pedigrees, libraries, law-codes; has memories and hopes, even for this Earth, that reach over thousands of years.<sup>44</sup>

Yet just as Carlyle settles into his mutually exclusive binary segregations, so does he explicitly identify that transience as a characteristic of the society of which he was a part:

The Nomad has his very house set on wheels; the Nomad, and in a still higher degree the Ape, are all for ‘liberty;’ the privilege to flit continually is indispensable to them. Alas, in how many ways, does our humour, in this swift-rolling self-abrading Time, shew itself nomadic, apelike; mournful enough to him that looks on it with eyes!<sup>45</sup>

Carlyle, of course, is hardly averring kinship with nomads. Nevertheless, he is projecting mobility with savage associations onto those who exploit the mutability of the industrialized cash-nexus society. Impermanence and ape-like humours are *produced* by society as it stands, or rather shifts, at the present time. And not only communal identity is afflicted: personal identity is eroded and made transient in the friction of this motion. For as Carlyle put it in *Chartism* (1840), approvingly cited in Friedrich Engel’s *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845), “English commerce” materializes “world-wide, convulsive fluctuations”.<sup>46</sup>

Precisely because of this, rogues provoked repressive responses, designed to curtail potential and actual deviance in normative systems. Yet rogues continued to travel through the same infrastructures as those very social, material, and economic forces which so desperately seek to prevent restlessness (by coercing and compelling the geographically or ideologically errant into productivity, or, if they will not be coerced, by displacing or confining them).

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43 Langan, op.cit., 12, 224. See also Fumerton, ‘Making Vagrancy (In)visible’, 198.

44 Carlyle, T. (1843 rpt 1965) *Past and Present*, ed. R.D. Altick. New York: New York UP, 274.

45 Carlyle, op.cit.

46 Engels, F. (1845 rpt 1987) *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 144.

The displaced and mobile exemplify the contradictory potentialities of circulatory socio-economics. Indeed, it is this characteristic that *guarantees* the urge to discriminate. As Jonathan Dollimore avers: “The other may be feared because structured within an economy of the same”.<sup>47</sup> One might modify Dollimore: the other may be feared *and therefore* structured – accommodated – within a material and moral economy of the same. In *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), Adam Smith fixed vagrants in a description that seeks to diminish their dissident charge by including them in a general political economy:

Nobody but a beggar chooses to depend chiefly upon the benevolence of his fellow-citizens. Even a beggar does not depend upon it entirely. ... The greater part of his occasional wants are supplied in the same manner as those of other people, by treaty, by barter, and by purchase. With the money which one man gives him he purchases food. The old cloths which another bestows upon him he exchanges for other old cloths which suit him better, or for lodging, or for food, or for money, with which he can buy either food, cloths, or lodging, as he has occasion.<sup>48</sup>

This does not disavow relations but organizes them. Smith offers an ostensibly unproblematic rendering of beggars as in equivalence and concord with the autonomous, rationally-consuming individuals that he deems everyone else to be. Smith simultaneously sanitizes the threat beggars pose, and obscures the material dislocations they have endured. His description evokes a sense of connection, even as the very existence of beggars reveals the disconnections that indict a socio-economic system with no home for such people. Smith effects an urgent sheltering, a necessary display of the seeming naturalness and omnipresence of the patterns of economic behaviour that he valorizes. However, for all that, the description *is* a display, a tendentious reconfiguring, shadowed by the fear that the alienation it effaces is the truly omnipresent phenomenon.

As Marx, Carlyle and Smith variously indicate, the insatiable valencies of capitalism problematized spatial segregation, social discrimination, and even personal identity, as they produced deviant mobilities. Yet *because* of the deviant mobilities produced, these valencies also produced “repressive geopolitics” that sought to organize mobility, the latter by financing the booming “fiscal-military state”.<sup>49</sup> By moving within legitimate structures, deviants may destabilize but not always efface the distinctions inherent to such structures.

More recent commentators have contributed to the theoretics of mobility, as a deviant force with bases in normative structures, structures that seek to suppress this deviance. Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt developed Marxist and Deleuzian approaches to describe the ways in which the international matrices of post-modern socio-economics simultaneously produce, depend upon, and yet are jeopardized by, ‘savage mobility’.<sup>50</sup> To Negri and Hardt, as also to Edward Said, this mobility within and between nation

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47 Dollimore, op.cit., 229.

48 Smith, A. (1993 rpt 1998) *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. Kathryn Sutherland (ed.). Oxford: OUP, 22-23.

49 Young, R.J.C. (1995) *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*. London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 173; Brewer, J. (1989) *The Sinews of Power: War, money and the English state, 1688-1783*. London: Unwin Hyman, 26.

50 Hardt, M. and A. Negri (2000) *Empire*. Cambridge, Mass., London: Harvard UP, 214.

states is cause and effect of grievous coercions.<sup>51</sup> People endure great hardship and insecurity as they move to escape wars and oppression, or to find work. Yet even as this mobility is impelled in part by globalized capital, so has the 'power' underwriting capital directed 'extreme violence' against it.<sup>52</sup> This is because mobility between and within states causes cultural 'miscegenation' that disrupts the identities and constructs on which power is based. Such disruption constitutes a "spontaneous level of struggle" against this power.<sup>53</sup>

Though this grandly liberationist narrative can be critiqued, these are stimulating analyses of the instabilities induced by the circulation of people and things.<sup>54</sup> However, despite Negri and Hardt's otherwise rigorously interperiodic approach, such analyses fail to consider prefigurations of the phenomena they describe.<sup>55</sup> It is possible to chart earlier alignments of the internally displaced and the globally mobile.

For example, the material reality of Elizabethan and Jacobean colonial plantations in Ireland actually induced vagabondage as much as it profitably cleared lands and civilized a supposedly barbarous populace. Some exiled Ulster 'peasants' ended up as vagrants on the streets of London, constituting a 'great eyesore', as a letter of 1606 from the Privy Council to the Lord Deputy of Ireland and the Irish Council complained. The letter also condemns "the negligence of the officers of ports" for allowing the indigent Irish to enter the country.<sup>56</sup> Such realities indicate the inconsistencies bedeviling dominant socio-political practices.

Succeeding centuries offer other material manifestations of the disruptive alignment of the internally roguish and the globally displaced. Rogues co-opted by impressment into colonial enterprises; native vagrants relocated to new territories for punishment; aliens dislocated by mercantile expansions and imperial arrogations, and then treated like vagabonds in the very heart of that empire: these are disparate experiences, yet they signify the enforcement of power, *over* rogues and sometimes *by* them.<sup>57</sup>

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51 See Said, E. (1994) *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Vintage, 402-408.

52 Hardt and Negri, op.cit., 212.

53 Hardt and Negri, op.cit., 362, 213.

54 In Negri and Hardt's words, their approach is reliant on a 'postcolonial hero' capable of destroying 'particularisms' and thereby creating an essentialized, supra-national, super-sovereign 'common civilization'(363). One might argue the contrary. Homi K. Bhabha (1994 rpt 2000) suggests that contemporary hybrid 'hyphenations' actually 'emphasize...incommensurable elements' and 'differential identities' as the basis of 'cultural identifications.' See *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 219. In turn, though acknowledging the significance of Bhabha's arguments, Negri and Hardt question the utility of them; see *Empire*, 143-46.

55 See Featherstone, M. (1997) 'Travel, Migration, and Images of Social Life', in W. Gungwu (ed.) *Global History and Migrations*. Boulder, Oxford: Westview, 239-77; and also Papastergiadis, N. (2000) *The Turbulence of Migration: Globalization, Deterritorialization and Hybridity*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 9-10, 25-30.

56 Cited in George, M.D. (1925 rpt 1965) *London Life in the Eighteenth Century*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 349.

57 For earlier historical examples, see Richardson, R.C. and T.B. James (eds.) (1983) *The urban experience: A sourcebook, English, Scottish and Welsh towns, 1450-1700*. Manchester: MUP, 121, 167; Games, A. (1999) *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* Camb. Mass., and

Correspondingly, however, deviance is immanent to these histories of settlement and disruption. As Peter Linebaugh puts it, a “red ‘Rogue’s thread’ ran through “the cordage and sailcloth of HM Naval Stores”.<sup>58</sup>

## Art, Dialogue, and Deviant Mobility

Awareness of the ambiguities inherent to this heritage of deviant mobility and roguish states makes it possible to conceive the contemporaneity of these concerns.

Currently, competing hegemonies perniciously organize the direction of the benefits of global and local socio-economic systems. It is grossly simplistic to affirm that “you cannot help but feel that the march to a ‘borderless world’ is proceeding briskly.”<sup>59</sup> For despite the myriad mobilities and intercourings that have historically constituted and continue to make communities, local-global authorities are consolidating boundaries, in what the sociologist Nikos Papastergiadis terms a ‘haunting paradox’.<sup>60</sup> Naomi Klein accentuates the paradox: “as barriers to trade come down, barriers to people go up”.<sup>61</sup> As David Sibley has observed: “Not being able to cross boundaries is the common fate of many would-be migrants”.<sup>62</sup> More than ever before, mobility is divided into legitimate and illegitimate forms. Individuals as well as nations endure their own ‘rogue’ status, with all the historical and semantic inconsistencies of such status conveniently ignored. ‘Rogue state’ designations are but one indication of this: police authorities in an ancient English university town recently revived 180-year old legislation – contentious at its inception – to prosecute beggars.<sup>63</sup> Given this, we would do well to ask how present-day artists have realized the histories of roguish mobility outlined here.

Isaac Julien’s work typically and brilliantly interrogates formations and deformations of sexual and racial identities (and, importantly, the relations of these across normative discriminatory boundaries). But his concerns range wide. Kobena Mercer asserts:

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London: Harvard UP, 48; and Hansen, A. (2003) *Vagabondia: Realizing Rogues 1535-1870*, unpublished Doctoral thesis, University of York.

58 Linebaugh, P. (1988) ‘All the Atlantic Mountains Shook’, in G. Eley and W. Hunt (eds.) *Reviving the English Revolution: Reflections and Elaborations on the Work of Christopher Hill*. London, New York: Verso, 211. See also Linebaugh, P. and M. Rediker (2002) *The Many-Headed Hydra: The Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*. London: Verso; and Gould, E.H. (2002) ‘Revolution and Counter-Revolution’, in D. Armitage and M.J. Braddick (eds.) *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*. Houndmills: Palgrave, 196-213.

59 *The Economist* 1998, quoted in Mitchell, D. (2000 rpt 2001) *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 273. As Papastergiadis asserts in *The Turbulence of Migration*: “We do not live in a borderless world”, Papastergiadis, op.cit., 10.

60 Papastergiadis, op.cit., 2-3.

61 Klein, N. (2002) *Fences and Windows: Dispatches from the Front Lines of the Globalization Debate*. London: Flamingo, 72.

62 Sibley, D. (1995) *Geographies of exclusion: Society and Difference in the West*. London and New York: Routledge, 32.

63 See Morris, S. (24 February 2003) ‘Beggars feel Dickensian chill’, *The Guardian*, 9. The town is Cambridge.

Julien's work makes a difference not because some mysterious negro homosexual ectoplasm has been magically transferred onto acetate and celluloid, but because as an artist he has made cultural and political choices that situate him in a critical position at the interface between different aesthetic traditions. In other words, he makes use of experiences of marginality to uncover the complexity of lived relations in the spaces between relations of "race, class, gender".<sup>64</sup>

Julien is thus ideally placed to devise art that connects the displacements induced by imperialist organizations, practices and discourses with the dislocations and relocations of local-global roguishness, Hardt and Negri's 'savage mobility'. Indeed, citing Julien, Teshome H. Gabriel has sought to theorize the congruence between 'black people' and 'nomads'. While noting they are "racially and ethnically distinct", Gabriel asserts: "They are also united in the very idea of space – they are both marginalized and (de)territorialized peoples. ...Just as the nomads are synthesizers of surrounding cultures they pass through, so are the blacks."<sup>65</sup>

In 2000, Julien exhibited a piece entitled *Vagabondia*. In the split screens of this work, a man dressed in ragged eighteenth-century garb dances and distorts his body while wandering through that temple to edifying antiquity, Sir John Soane's Museum.

The museum, located at Lincoln's Inn Fields in London's legal heartland, is an idiosyncratic arrangement of artefacts, ephemera and icons, from around the world. The objects are diverse: books, paintings, sketches, casts, antique vases, reproductions, mosaics, cabinets of keys, ceramic fragments, sarcophagi, cameos, busts, bronzes, gems, astronomical clocks, architectural models, slave shackles, a Sumatran fungus, and more. They are raised on plinths, scattered over walls, hung on hinged frames, or hidden in recesses. Soane acquired his collection during tours of Europe in the latter half of the 1700s, in an effort to educate genteel young men about "every aspect of architectural practice"; he wanted them to learn "the language of the classical Orders alongside the daily business of the office."<sup>66</sup> Soane served as architect for Prime Minister William Pitt. He worked on rebuilding Newgate Prison after the Gordon Riots of 1781; designed the Bank of England in 1788; drew up plans for law courts and the Houses of Parliament; and in his grandest vision, re-drew London to surpass the glories of Rome. Soane was manifestly part of the establishment. His aesthetic was as solid as his material credentials: "Soane was no proselytiser but the enlightenment was his creed and classical antiquity his church."<sup>67</sup>

Viewing Soane in this light, the performance by Julien's rogue is obviously subversive. There is something stimulating about the incongruity produced by bucking normal patterns of material, ideological, and cultural displacement, to situate a houseless and irreverent figure in a monument to building, instituted by someone who made a career

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64 Mercer, K. (1994) *Welcome to the Jungle: New Positions in Black Cultural Studies*. New York and London: Routledge, 226-27.

65 Gabriel (1990 rpt 1999) 'Thoughts on Nomadic Aesthetics and the Black Independent Cinema: traces of a Journey', in R. Ferguson, M. Gever, T.T. Minh-ha and C. West (eds.) *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Culture*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, 402. Gabriel's account clearly suffers from essentializing both 'nomadic' and 'black' identities.

66 Darley, G. (1999) *John Soane: An Accidental Romantic*. New Haven and London: Yale UP, 100.

67 Darley, op.cit., 159.

out of pragmatically setting segregation – of capital, people, and culture – in stone. The rogue’s grotesque, somatic, and playful capers compromise classical decorum. The continence that such decorum embodied has no power over the dancer, even *here*, in all the accreted, arrogated splendour of an empire’s capital’s museum, a structure with a ‘bibliophile’s sanctum’, and a walled garden accessible only to key-holders.<sup>68</sup> It is impossible to keep the scum out, to restrain society’s excrescences. They bring about disavowed proximities between states roguish and reputable, disturbing the integrity of art, and the powers that underwrite art’s value and whose values are underwritten by art.<sup>69</sup>

But to see Soane as a designer-in-chief for a matrix of authoritative interests (financial, penal, and cultural), and hence to cast Julien’s work as a record of cultural sabotage, is to see only part – one screen – of the picture. Soane was the son of an anti-clerical brick-maker. As he ascended the ranks of his profession to build for the great and the good, his past’s dust stuck: “throughout his life he deliberately avoided all mention of his origins.”<sup>70</sup> His aesthetic may have been rigorously ordered, but Soane’s ‘personality’ was ‘suppressive’; to Gillian Darley, this suppression resulted from necessity as much as design: “if his architectural language was one of classicism and his intellect tended towards an Enlightenment view of the world, then his personality was a maelstrom of conflict.”<sup>71</sup> This disseminator of the disciplined (and disciplining) formal ideal was afflicted by intellectual errancy, being “naïve, impressionable, easily thrown off course.” Sir John Summerson, curator of the museum from 1945 to 1984, believed that Soane displayed “a streak of instability, even paranoia...at moments (often exacerbated by bad physical health and, especially, the fear of blindness) he lost his reason, sense and self-control.”<sup>72</sup>

To perceive Soane in *this* light is to begin to appraise Julien’s art more scrupulously, to see the whole/broken screen(s) of the picture. The rogue’s motions can only be understood in relation to the normative structures of the museum and the cultural values it materializes, and also, importantly, in relation to the instabilities inherent to such structures. To depict someone moving in so deviant a fashion here, in the house of someone beset by cultural and personal tensions, is to bring those tensions to life. Darley notes that “the house is, above all, an autobiographical statement – with all the ambiguities that that suggests.”<sup>73</sup> Developing this idea, we can see that the ambiguities of the museum are simultaneously cultivated and suppressed by Soane himself.

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68 Darley, *op.cit.*, 100.

69 As Stallybrass and White observe in their discussions of the grotesque body as articulated by Bakhtin: ‘By disowning the grotesque body the Enlightenment rendered itself peculiarly vulnerable to the shock of its continual presence or to its unexpected rediscovery’, Stallybrass and White, *op.cit.*, 108. For Bakhtin’s analyses of bodies classical and grotesque, see Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, 18, 21, 26, 316-17, 415-16, 435.

70 Darley, *op.cit.*, 1.

71 Darley, *op.cit.*, ix.

72 Darley, *op.cit.*, vii-viii.

73 Darley, *op.cit.*, vi.

Due to the presence of the scruffy vagabond, the structural (and conceptual) foundations and limits of Soane's museum become a little shaky. Yet Soane was perhaps aware of this instability. In *Crude Hints towards the History of my House* (1812) this obsessive collector of the detritus of decayed worlds imagined himself "spectrally visiting the ruins" of his home in 1830.<sup>74</sup>

This is not, however, to imply that Soane pre-empted all subversive potentialities, nor, indeed, that the rogue's challenge can be obviated. It is more useful to argue that Julien detonates existing fissures, extrapolates from disturbances in the fabric of the museum, and thereby synthesizes his aesthetic with Soane's, combatively and collaboratively:

Elements previously found or fixed in one code or tradition are freed up to travel through unexpected conduits and passageways, along the lines of the trickster's tap-dances...<sup>75</sup>

The pocked and permeable geometry of the museum is "encrusted...with convex mirrors"; Soane lined the rooms with "glittery...interiors":

Shadows and light, memory and reflection, were at the heart of his house: enclosed within the labyrinth, the obsessive aspect of Soane's personality was completely at home.<sup>76</sup>

Julien's response to this orchestrated environment is thus as deeply sympathetic as it is critical. His visual style, exemplified in *Vagabondia*, concords with Soane's grand designs, involving "fragmentation", the "kaleidoscopic confluence of looks and gazes ...and internal mirror effects".<sup>77</sup> Comparably, when discussing the possibilities offered by digital technologies, Julien has characterized his representational mode as a "visually transgressive intertextuality" of "bricolage techniques".<sup>78</sup> Exacting as his cultural discriminations are, Soane too can be considered a bricoleur, an assimilator, a juxtaposer. Julien therefore realizes a profound relationship with his subject, via what the critic Kobena Mercer terms a 'syncretic dynamic' involving a 'hybridizing tendency' which "critically appropriates elements from the master-codes of the dominant culture and *creolizes* them".<sup>79</sup>

Subsequently, the vagabond is not just a person out of place – he is *at home* here, in Soane's house, and in the city and empire surrounding it.<sup>80</sup> Hidden vectors of movement and roguish states are mapped and facilitated by Soane's designs, but only Julien's engagement with the museum reveals their trajectories:

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74 Darley, op.cit., 299, 214-15.

75 Mercer (2001) 'Avid Iconographies', in *Isaac Julien*. London: Ellipsis, 9.

76 Darley, op.cit., 305, 101, 306.

77 Darke, C. (2001) 'Territories: the tell-tale trajectory of Isaac Julien', in *Isaac Julien*, 80.

78 Interview (July 1999) 'Face to Face: Isaac Julien', *Sight and Sound*, New Series, 9 (7): 33.

79 Mercer, *Welcome to the Jungle*, op.cit., 62-63.

80 On the ways in which Western urban architecture accommodates and anaesthetizes deviance, see Bruns, G.L. (1987) 'Cain: Or, The Metaphorical Construction of Cities', *Salmagundi*, 74-75: 70-85; and Sennett, R. (1994) *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization*. London, Boston: Faber and Faber, esp. 25-26.

Inside No. 13, rather than the conventional eighteenth-century compartmentalisation of space within a slice of terrace...Soane contrived a flowing sequence of rooms.<sup>81</sup>

It is at once through, against, and with this flow that Julien's rogue wanders.

## Conclusion

Thinking in this way opens up a conception of art (Soane's, Julien's, Mercer's, and otherwise), that does not confine its creation or reception to *monologic* models.

Said suggests that by reading Theodor Adorno on and in exile one learns of both the "negative advantage of refuge in the émigré's eccentricity" and "the positive benefit" of "challenging...the irresistible dominants in culture".<sup>82</sup> Comparably, Papastergiadis suggests:

Movement is not just the experience of shifting from place to place, it is also linked to our ability to imagine an alternative.<sup>83</sup>

Julien alerts us to the relationships and possibilities indicated by mobility and roguishness inherent to his own art, to Soane's, and to the cultures that envelop both. Such possibilities evince that challenges to the false decorum and integrity of dominant discriminatory spatial and ideological organizations exist within and relative to such organizations. Simultaneously, Julien identifies the problems of using ideas about and designations of 'roguishness'. It is impossible to essentialize experiences or realizations of rogue states, or, accordingly, to separate 'rogue' from 'reputable'. Julien illuminates how the rogue can be realized, past and present: roguishness is relational, not absolute.

Fittingly, this is a way of making and looking that does *not* coerce art into being the pure product of one mind expressing one thing purely, either reputable/good or roguish/evil; either subversive/liberatory or reactionary/repressive; either deterministically saturated by, and crudely reflective of, the contexts of production, or transcendently separate from those contexts; either continuous with cultural or ideological norms, or radically discontinuous with them. *Vagabondia* presents an interaction between two men worlds apart, with Julien teasing and Soane playing the game. This transgressive interaction offers a dialogic model that informs ways of seeing and reading in other areas, where dialogism is characterized as a concept that allows art, artists and critics to articulate alternatives, to manifest the incommensurable, and to realize and live the contradictions of their selves and the cultures they inhabit.<sup>84</sup>

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81 Darley, op.cit., 212.

82 Said, op.cit., 404; see especially Adorno, T.W. (1951 rpt 2000) *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, trans. E.F.N. Jephcott. London: Verso, 39. For a passionate contextualization of this work, see Said, E. (2000) 'Reflections on Exile', in E. Said (ed.) *Reflections on Exile*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 173-86.

83 Papastergiadis, op.cit., 11.

84 See Julien and Mercer (Autumn 1988), 'De Margin and De Centre', *Screen*, 29 (4):10.

In other words, dialogism simultaneously accepts and problematizes the differences and connections that characterize roguish mobility, (differences often marshalled for reactionary ends, connections often shrouded for the same ends). In turn, this perspective suggests that challenges to dominant discourses may not revolutionize in one context or moment but may release ideas, the manumission and effects of which cannot always be legislated against or for, because ideas in another time or place may prove inspirational, despite the cost of the challenge. It realizes that art and criticism, in their responses to histories of which they are constituents, in their rehearsal and revision of orthodoxies, and in their impure hybridity, present exhilarating and discomfiting aspects. Finally, and with relevance for the ways in which this study was and might be conceived, it suggests that there are many voices, not one, all arguing, agreeing, connecting, discriminating, ignoring, adapting, adopting, deviant and normative, critical and creative:

We can't afford to let dialogue become a lost art...our networks and channels of communication have got to remain open.

It's not possible to construct truth out of one idea or one set of ideas, one individual or one set of individuals. Ideas don't belong to anybody. Every idea that there's ever been is shaped collectively, by the dead as well as the living. If we take one we don't have to take them all; and we can take part of one and leave out the other bits. If there's one thing worth reading in the works of Lenin or Trotsky or especially Marx, then it's the index. You don't have to go away and study all the writers and thinkers that they did. You just have to recognise that that is what they did. They *explored*. Nothing's sacred. That's not how it works.<sup>85</sup>

#### the author

Adam Hansen was recently awarded his PhD from the University of York for a thesis entitled 'Vagabondia: Realizing Rogues 1535-1870'; this looked at (amongst other things) Elizabethan Rogue Pamphlets, Daniel Defoe, William Godwin and Dickens, and the relations between literature, history and ideology. Having spent 2003-2004 engaged in peregrinations of his own, as Director of English Studies at South East European University (Tetovo, Macedonia), he started work at Brasenose College (Oxford) in October. He'd like to thank Angela Bate and Matt Hartman for their help with this paper.  
Address: Brasenose College, Radcliffe Square, Oxford, OX1 4AJ.  
E-mail: hansenadam@yahoo.com

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85 Kelman, J. (1992) 'Harry McShane's Centenary', in *Some Recent Attacks: Essays Cultural and Political*. Stirling: AK Press, 52.